CONFIDENTIAL.] No. 2 of 1898.]

# REPORT

ON

# NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

## Week ending the 8th January 1898.

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## LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

| No. | Names of newspapers. | Place of publication. | Reported number of subscribers. | Dates of papers received and examined for the week. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Bengali.** | **Calcutta.** | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Bangavasi" ... ... | Calcutta ... | 20,000 | 1st January, 1898. | |
| 2 | "Basumati" ... ... | Ditto ... | ..... | 23rd December, 1897, and 6th January, 1898 | |
| 3 | "Hitaishi" ... ... | Ditto ... | 800 | 4th January, 1898. | |
| 4 | "Hitavadi" ... ... | Ditto ... | About 4,000 | 31st December, 1897. | |
| 5 | "Mihir-o-Sudhakar" ... | Ditto ... | 1,250 | 1st January, 1898. | |
| 6 | "Sahachar" ... ... | Ditto ... | About 500 | 29th December, 1897. | |
| 7 | "Samay" ... ... | Ditto ... | 3,000 | 31st December, 1897, and 7th January, 1898. | |
| 8 | "Sanjivani" ... ... | Ditto ... | 3,000 | 1st January, 1898. | |
| 9 | "Som Prakash" ... | Ditto ... | 800 | 3rd ditto. | |
| 10 | "Sulabh Samachar" ... | Ditto ... | ..... | | |
| | *Daily.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Barga Vidya Prakashika" | Ditto ... | 300 | 6th ditto. | |
| 2 | "Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika." | Ditto ... | 1,000 | 30th December, 1897, and 2nd to 5th January, 1898. | |
| 3 | "Samvad Prabhakar" ... | Ditto ... | 1,132 | 3rd to 7th January, 1898. | |
| 4 | "Samvad Purnachandrodaya" | Ditto ... | 200 | 31st December, 1897, 1st and 3rd to 7th January, 1898. | |
| 5 | "Sulabh Dainik" ... | Ditto ... | Read by 3,000 | | |
| | **Hindi.** | | | | |
| | *Fortnightly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Marwari Gazette" ... | Ditto ... | ..... | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Bharat Mitra" ... | Ditto ... | 2,000 | 30th December, 1897. | |
| 2 | "Hindi Bangavasi" ... | Ditto .. | 10,000 | 3rd January, 1898. | |
| | **Persian.** | | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Hablul Mateen" ... | Ditto ... | 500 | | |
| | **Urdu.** | | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide." | Ditto ... | 310 | 30th December, 1897. | |
| 2 | "General and Gauhariasfi" | Ditto ... | 330 | 31st ditto. | |
| | *Tri-weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Nusrat-ul-Islam" ... | Ditto ... | ..... | 3rd and 5th January, 1898. | |

| No. | Names of Newspapers. | Place of publication. | Reported number of subscribers. | Dates of papers received and examined for the week. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Bengali.** | **Burdwan Division.** | | | |
| | *Fortnightly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Pallivasi" ... | Kalna ... | ..... | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Bankura Darpan" ... | Bankura ... | 500 | 1st January, 1898. | |
| 2 | "Bankura Hitaishi" ... | Ditto ... | ..... | | |
| 3 | "Burdwan Sanjivani" ... | Burdwan ... | 250 | 28th December, 1897. | |
| 4 | "Chinsura Vartavaha" ... | Chinsura .. | 620 | | |
| 5 | "Education Gazette" ... | Hooghly ... | 1,280 | | |
| | **Bengali.** | **Presidency Division.** | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Murshidabad Hitaishi" ... | Murshidabad ... | 696 | | |
| 2 | "Pratikar" ... ... | Ditto ... | 603 | 31st December, 1897. | |
| | **Uriya.** | **Orissa Division.** | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Sambalpur Hitaishini" ... | Bamra in the Central Provinces. | ..... | 17th November, 1897. | This paper is said to have some circulation in the Division, but the number of subscribers could not be ascertained. |
| 2 | "Samvad Vahika" ... | Balasore ... | 190 | 16th ditto. | |
| 3 | "Uriya and Navasamvad" ... | Ditto ... | 309 | 17th ditto. | |
| 4 | "Utkal Dipika" ... | Cuttack ... | 480 | 20th ditto. | |
| | **Hindi.** | **Patna Division.** | | | |
| | *Monthly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Bihar Bandhu" ... | Bankipur ... | About 600 | 20th December, 1897. | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Aryavarta" ... ... | Dinapur ... | 1,000 | 1st January, 1898. | |
| | **Urdu.** | | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Al Punch" ... ... | Bankipur ... | 500 | 31st December, 1897. | |
| 2 | "Gaya Punch" ... ... | Gaya ... | 400 | | |
| | **Bengali.** | **Bhagalpur Division.** | | | |
| | *Fortnightly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Gaur Varta" ... | Malda ... | ..... | | |
| | **Bengali.** | **Rajshahi Division.** | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Hindu Ranjika" ... | Boalia, Rajshahi ... | 243 | 22nd December 1897. | This paper is not regularly published for want of type. |
| 2 | "Rangpur Dikprakash" ... | Kakina, Rangpur ... | 180 | | |
| | **Hindi.** | | | | |
| | *Monthly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Darjeeling Mission ke Masik Samachar Patrika." | Darjeeling ... | 700 | | |

| No. | Names of Newspapers. | Place of publication. | Reported number of subscribers. | Dates of papers received and examined for the week. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Bengali.** | **Dacca Division.** | | | |
| | *Fortnightly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Faridpur Hitaishini" .. | Faridpur ... | ..... | | |
| 2 | "Kasipur Nivasi" ... | Kasipur, Barisal ... | 315 | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Barisal Hitaishi" ... | Barisal ... | ..... | | |
| 2 | "Charu Mihir" ... | Mymensingh ... | 900 | 27th December, 1897. | |
| 3 | "Dacca Prakash" ... | Dacca ... | 2,400 | 2nd January, 1898. | |
| 4 | "Sanjay" ... ... | Faridpur ... | ..... | 31st December, 1897. | |
| 5 | "Saraswat Patra" ... | Dacca ... | About 500 | 1st January, 1898. | |
| | **English and Bengali.** | | | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Dacca Gazette" ... | Dacca ... | 500 | 3rd January, 1898. | |
| | **Bengali.** | **Chittagong Division.** | | | |
| | *Fortnightly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Tripura Hitaishi" .. | Comilla ... | ..... | | |
| | *Weekly.* | | | | |
| 1 | "Sansodhini" ... ... | Chittagong ... | 120 | | |
| | **Bengali.** | **Assam.** | | | |
| 1 | "Paridarshak-o-Srihattavasi" | Sylhet ... | ..... | | |
| 2 | "Silchar" ... ... | Silchar, Cachar ... | ..... | | |

## I.—Foreign Politics.

The *Pratikar* of the 31st December writes as follows:— PRATIKAR, Dec. 31st, 1897.

The firearms of the frontier people.

It is extremely strange that the firearms which the frontier people have been using in the fight are most of them not mere crude weapons, but rifles with all modern scientific refinements. The doubt which was so long expressed about the source of supply of these weapons has also been set at rest. An examination of the rifles which have come into the hands of the English shows that they were supplied neither by the Amir nor by Russia, but almost all of them bear the mark of English manufacturers. According to many English editors, all these rifles were shipped from Liverpool and Manchester, and having arrived at the Persian Gulf, found their way to the north-western frontier of India. There is nothing like greed of gold, and the very English who are famous for their patriotism have not hesitated, for money's sake, to do harm to their own country by secretly selling weapons of destruction to their enemies, fully knowing that they would be used against their own countrymen, and not improbably against the sellers' own sons. But a trader can do everything. There is another question to be solved in connection with the possession of these modern firearms by the frontier tribes. Where did they get the money with which they purchased them? One Martini-Henri rifle costs Rs. 300 besides the price of the cartridges. If the frontier tribes had the money to purchase these costly things in thousands and millions, are they the uncivilised people everybody takes them to be? Many old and rejected weapons of Indian manufactories have also been received from the enemy in a serviceable condition. The figures which are available disclose startling facts. Among 120 rifles, 61 were old weapons of the above description, and 47 weapons stolen from British regiments. As for rifles imported direct from England, they number 11 in a dozen! Only one rifle out of the 120 referred to above has been found to be of Russian manufacture. It is fortunate for the poor Amir that his factories have not to account for a single rifle. The one Russian rifle need not excite suspicion, when, in spite of the great strictness observed by the Indian Military Department, such large numbers of rifles from British regiments have found their way to the frontier people. Considering the affluence of the frontier people, the fines, &c., which have been imposed upon them, have been too small to serve as a punishment. It does not, as a matter of fact, seem from their conduct that they feel themselves punished at all.

## II.—Home Administration.

### (*a*)—*Police.*

2. The *Sahachar* of the 29th December says that on the 28th December last, about 4 or 5 o'clock in the evening, a daring dacoity was committed in the zamindari cutcherry of the Mitra Babus of Ban-Hugli near Boral, within the jurisdiction of the Sonarpur thana in the 24-Parganas district. It is the last of the four dacoities which have been committed within a short time in the village Boral or near it. The first dacoity was committed in the house of Kader Gazi, the second in the house of Akshay Kumar Banerji, and the third in the house of Bahadur Khan and Mujdin Khan. After the very first case, the writer requested the Magistrate of the 24-Parganas to employ detectives or other efficient police officers to trace out the dacoits. But as the Magistrate took no special measures to put them down they have grown bold, and the more respectable among the residents of Boral have been compelled to remove themselves from the village. There is a panic prevailing in Boral and the adjoining villages, which the Lieutenant Governor is requested to remove. SAHACHAR, Dec. 29th, 1897.

Frequent dacoities in a village in the 24-Parganas district.

3. Referring to the case of Chhamman Lal and Hira Tewari, which was lately decided at the Sessions of the Calcutta High Court, the *Hitavadi* of the 31st December observes that it will be a great regret if even after this the Calcutta police does not keep a sharp eye upon the Calcutta *gundas*. That in the heart of the metropolis and in broad daylight *gundas* can safely carry on their nefarious practices on public thoroughfares is a serious reproach to the police and a most regrettable proof of its inefficiency. Bhajan Lal was long in dread of the *gundas*, and HITAVADI, Dec. 31st, 1897.

*Gunda* oppression in Calcutta.

applied to the Police Commissioner and the Lieutenant-Governor for protection, but in vain. The *gundas* shadowed Bhajan Lal for a long time, and, setting the police at naught, assaulted him on the public road in broad daylight and in the eye of hundreds of people. This certainly does not reflect credit on the executive authorities. *Gunda* oppression is not a new thing in Calcutta, still *gundas* are not put down by the police. This fact is gradually shaking the public confidence in the efficiency of the police. The authorities ought to remove this reproach on the Calcutta Police.

SAMAY, Dec. 31st, 1897.

*Faudidars*, &c., in the Midnapore district.

4. A correspondent of the *Samay* of the 31st December wants to know whether the *faudidars* and the *sardars* and *piyadas* under them, who are to be met with in such places as the Ghatal, Chandrakona, Daspur and Kespur thanas of the Midnapore district, are Government servants. If so, why are they not made amenable to transfer rules?

*(b)—Working of the Courts.*

CHARU MIHIR, Dec. 24th, 1897.

Distribution of work to court amins in the Mymensingh district.

5. A correspondent of the *Charu Mihir* of the 27th December cannot understand why important boundary cases in connection with the *chur* in the Yabuna river in the Tangail subdivision of the Mymensingh district are, as a rule, made over to the two additional court amins, Babus Sasibhusan and Iswar Chandra, who are brothers, and not to any permanent court amin, for investigation and report. There seems to be some mystery in this. In boundary cases the Courts have to rely entirely upon the amins' reports, and it is not possible without local investigation to ascertain whether such reports are correct or not. Under the circumstances, it is desirable that such cases should be investigated by experienced and permanent court amins. It is hoped that the District Judge of Mymensingh, if he himself has not the time, will depute some Subordinate Judge to enquire why this is not done. He should also delegate the duty of distributing work to court amins, and of inspecting the court amins' diaries to some Subordinate Judge, if he cannot spare time to do this personally.

HITAVADI, Dec. 31st, 1897.

Mr. Justice Strachey's charge to the jury.

6. The *Pioneer*, writes the *Hitavadi* of the 31st December, says that Mr. Justice Strachey has published a pamphlet containing his charge to the jury, together with the judgments of the Privy Council and the Full Bench of the Bombay High Court, refusing permission for appeal. The writer asks the *Pioneer* whether the charge said to be published by Mr. Justice Strachey is the very same which he delivered in Court, or is one which he wrote after the trial was over. During the trial a reporter belonging to the staff of the *Advocate of India* was engaged by the defence to report the proceedings. He has stated on oath that his report of Mr. Justice Strachey's charge to the jury is a faithful one, as he took down every word as it fell from the Judge. Is Mr. Justice Strachey prepared to call this reporter a liar? Whom are we to believe if we find a disagreement between the charge as reported in Court and the charge as published under Mr. Justice Strachey's authority? Will the *Pioneer* answer these questions?

HITAVADI.

A theft case in Noakhali mysteriously withdrawn.

7. The same paper comments upon a correspondence published in the *Indian Mirror*, of which the purport is as follows:—

One Abdul Jubbar charged one Sadar Ali Mistry with the theft of a goat belonging to him. The case came up for hearing before the Court of an Honorary Magistrate, when the accused said that he had bought the animal from the wife of the District Magistrate. Mr. Agasti was at once communicated with, and answered that no criminal offence had been committed in the case. 'Upon this the Honorary Magistrate declined to try the case, which was consequently referred to a Deputy Magistrate for disposal. During the trial the complainant produced evidence to prove that the goat belonged to him, while the Magistrate's men deposed that it belonged to their master. The trial was postponed, and when the case came up for further hearing the accused withdrew his complaint.

The writer in the *Hitavadi* cannot vouch for the truth of the above statements. If they are true, there must be something mysterious about the case.

Why did Abdul Jubbar suddenly withdraw his complaint? If he brought a false case, why was he not prosecuted?

8. A correspondent of the same paper says that Babu Indranath Banerji of the Burdwan Court was engaged as pleader in the Gaurisankar case (see Report on Native Papers for 1st January, paragraph 11), but having had occasion to conduct a case before the Deputy Commissioner that very day, he requested Mr. Heard not to proceed with the case till his return. Mr. Heard promised that he would not proceed with the case. But being urged by his pet, Nejabet Hossein, to proceed with the case, he broke his promise. Indra Babu was very much surprised to find on his return that the case had been already disposed of, and seeing the Manager in Court, sarcastically said:—"I would not have come if I had known that the Maulvi Saheb was a party to this case."

Mr. Heard.

HITAVADI. Dec. 31st, 1897.

The correspondent says that Nejabet Hossein has been a little sobered down by the writings in this paper. He has also become alarmed. When the Divisional Commissioner came to Deoghur about a month ago, Nejabet Hossein entreated him not to transfer Mr. Heard as well as himself from Deoghur. The Commissioner, it is said, has bade them be of good cheer. The alarmed people of Deoghur look up to Government for redress.

*(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

9. A correspondent of the *Charu Mihir* of the 27th December, complains of water scarcity in Rampur, within the jurisdiction of the Kendua thana in the Mymensingh district, caused in consequence of the complete or partial filling up of almost all tanks in the village in the earthquake. The only tank in the village which still contains some water is that belonging to Nabin Chandra Bhattacharyya. But that too is constantly fouled by low class people. As the drinking of impure water is causing sickness it is hoped that the Deputy Magistrate of Netrokona will take steps to supply the residents of Rampur with good drinking water.

Water scarcity in the Mymensingh district.

CHARU MIHIR, Dec. 27th, 1897.

Another correspondent of the same paper says that both men and cattle are suffering in consequence of water scarcity in village Chalas in the Mymensingh district. The two tanks which are the only sources of their water-supply are very old and contain very little water.

10. The *Hitavadi* of the 31st December has received the following from a correspondent complaining against the Raniganj Municipality:—

The Raniganj Municipality.

HITAVADI, Dec. 31st, 1897.

The roads are neither properly repaired nor properly watered. They are in fact in a very bad condition. Road metal has been lying in heaps on many of them for a long time, thereby seriously obstructing and inconveniencing traffic. The roads are not also properly lighted and the drains are not properly cleansed. The Municipality has ordered the ratepayers to whitewash their houses, but everything will be useless if the drains are not regularly cleansed. A plague camp is going to be erected at Raniganj, and the town ought to be kept in a perfectly sanitary condition. It will be a great reproach to the Municipality if through its neglect the plague finds a lodgment in the town.

The editor draws the attention of the municipal authorities to the above complaint.

11. The same paper learns from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* that Sir Alexander Mackenzie is contemplating a serious alteration in the constitution of the Calcutta Municipality—an alteration which will virtually prove ruinous to that body. There are at present seventy-five Commissioners on the Municipal Board. It is said that the Lieutenant-Governor is thinking of reducing the number to twelve. Of these twelve, again, only five are to be elected by the rate-payers, the remaining seven being nominated by the Government. Not long ago some such rumour as this was set afloat, but it was afterwards hushed up. If Sir Alexander Mackenzie ruins the Calcutta Municipality, which is so to speak the centre of self-government in this country, he will earn the opprobrium of the public. It is to be hoped that the rumour is unfounded, but it naturally creates anxiety when we are reminded of the

The rumoured amendment of the Calcutta Municipal Act.

HITAVADI.

Lieutenant-Governor's condemnation of the Municipal Commissioners in his Intally speech, and of the friction and difference between them and His Honour over Dr. Simpson.

BANGAVASI, Jan. 1st, 1898.

12. The *Bangavasi* of the 1st January writes as follows:—

The elective municipal system in Bengal.

In their reports on the municipal administration in Bengal, most Divisional Commissioners find fault with the election system and speak of the inefficiency of Municipal Commissioners and Chairmen. To speak plainly, the abolition of the election system is not likely to do any harm to the people. This system has been at the root of many new vices and many new forms of *badmashi*—quarrels, fights, feuds and back-biting being all traceable to it. It is in the line of the English to rule, to pass laws, to act unitedly. It goes against the grain of the natives to do so. It is therefore no wonder that we make a muddle of everything in our blind imitation of our rulers. We are very glad to understand that Sir Alexander Mackenzie is going to amend the Calcutta Municipal Act in a way which is sure to deal a death-blow at the present constitution of the Calcutta Municipality. Hot canvassing and bullying are already going on in Calcutta in view of the approaching municipal election, and we do not know what fiendish (*Paisach*) acts may be committed when the election actually takes place. We shall bless Sir Alexander Mackenzie if he can finish the work which he is said to be contemplating before the municipal election comes off.

*(g)—Railways and Communications, including Canals and Irrigation.*

HITAVADI, Dec. 31st, 1897.

13. The *Hitavadi* of the 31st December has the following:—

The Orissa Canal.

The following occurs in the Canal Administration Report for 1896-97, with reference to the financial state of the Orissa Canal:—

"There was an increase of Rs. 56,143 in the receipt and of Rs. 23,348 in the expenditure, the result being a deficit of Rs. 22,796 against Rs. 55,591 in 1895-96 and Rs. 1,50,975 in 1894-95."

It is superfluous to say that it is the Indian people who have to bear this loss. The history of the Orissa Canal will enable the reader to understand how this loss came to be imposed upon us. Sir Arthur Cotton organised a Joint Stock Company in England, who opened the canal as a money-making venture. It, however, proved a losing concern, and the Government was, through pressure from home, compelled to buy up the concern for three crores and a half. This huge sum of money, as precious to the Indian tax-payer as his blood, was as it were thrown into the sea, and he was, moreover, saddled with a huge annual expenditure.

BANKURA DARPAN, Jan. 1st, 1898.

14. A correspondent of the *Bankura Darpan* of the 1st January complains

Bad condition of certain roads in the Bankura district.

that the Bankadaha-Katulpur, Katulpur-Kamarpukur and Gele-Kayapat roads, within the jurisdiction of the Katulpur police-station in the Bankura district, are not only in a most wretched condition for want of proper repairs, but have been reduced to narrow paths by the encroachments of those whose lands lie by their sides. The District Board has supinely allowed these encroachments to go on to such an extent that roads which were originally thirty feet wide are now only ten feet in width. Formerly in most places these roads were kept in repair and good order by the people themselves or by the zamindars; but they have not received proper attention since the District Board has taken charge of them.

SOM PRAKASH, Jan. 3rd, 1898.

15. A correspondent of the *Som Prakash* of the 3rd January draws

Bad condition of a road in the Midnapore district.

attention to the absolute necessity of repairing the road, only a little more than half a mile in length, which runs between the Haludbari school and the Government embankment in the Contai subdivision of the Midnapore district. The road is used not only by the people of Haludbari, but by the residents of about forty or fifty neighbouring villages whenever they have occasion to come to the subdivisional head-quarters. The Chairman of the Local Board was applied to, but he said that there was no money this year.

*(ñ)—General.*

16. A correspondent of the *Charu Mihir* of the 27th December complains that people having deeds to register at the Katiadi sub-registry office in the Mymensingh district are put to great expense, delay and harassment. As agitation has failed to bring about a reform, the writer invites the attention of Maulvi Abdul Razak to the matter.

CHARU MIHIR, Dec. 27th, 1897.

A complaint against a sub-registry office in the Mymensingh district.

17. The *Sahachar* of the 29th December has the following:—

SAHACHAR, Dec. 29th, 1897.

What the Famine Commission should do.

Lord Elgin has appointed the Famine Commission certainly with the object of ascertaining what experience has been gained regarding Indian famines in the course of the late famine relief operations, and it is hoped that it will be one of the duties of the Commission to ascertain what cause or combination of causes leads to frequent famines in India. No doctor can prescribe the right medicine so long as an accurate diagnosis is not made of a disease; so Indian famines cannot be prevented so long as their true cause is not ascertained. We do not think it reasonable to say that failure of crops is the only cause of famine in this country. Every civilized country suffers from failure of crops from time to time, but in no country except India is such failure necessarily attended with famine. Famine should not occur in a country in which the poor people can lay by something in seasons of plenty for the dark days of scarcity. The greater the saving capability of the people of a country, the smaller is the chance of a famine occurring among them. Now, the question is, what is the saving capability of the people of India? Taking one part of the country for instance, namely Bihar, it is an admitted fact—a fact admitted by an experienced officer like Mr. Bourdillon—that though there is no uncultivated tract of land in Bihar, three per cent. of its people are in a chronic state of starvation and live entirely upon private charity. What Mr. Bourdillon has stated regarding Bihar has been shown by our respected countryman, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, to be true of the whole country. And many eminent social economists who have a particular knowledge of India have said that India's poverty is the true cause of the frequent occurrence of famine among its people. It is true the national wealth of India has increased under British rule. But the purchasing power of money is greatly reduced and the cost of living has consequently greatly increased. Another cause of the country's poverty is the inability of Government to carry ou internal improvements in consequence of want of money. The Government should of course do everything on the present occasion which is required to maintain its prestige on the frontier. But it should in future give up the forward policy, and devote the money which would be thereby saved to the country's internal improvement. Another means by which money can be saved by the Government is a larger employment of natives in certain departments of the public service, such as the Police Department, in which natives can be employed as District Superintendents and detective officers with greater benefit to the service and a good deal of saving to the Government. Men like Babu Radhika Prasad Sinha, one of the police inspectors in the Sonthal Parganas, would be an acquisition to the rank of District Superintendents, as they would be certain to effect an improvement in the police administration. Eminent politicians like Sir Charles Dilke now hold that the only means of improving the condition of the people of India is to curtail the cost of the administration. A permanent settlement of the land revenue of the whole country would also, as we have repeatedly said, be a great factor in the improvement of the material condition of the people. Speaking of the Orissa settlement, Sir William Hunter says that a permanent settlement of that province would not only be a means of improving the condition of its people, but would be a gain to the Government.

Considering the responsibility which lies upon the Government in the matter of the prevention of famine, it is hoped that Lord Elgin will ask the Commission to solve the question how famine can be averted in future.

18. The same paper thanks the Government and the Plague Commission for the new rules framed by the latter for the exemption from examination at plague inspection

SAHACHAR.

The new plague inspection rules.

stations of certain classes of passengers on their complying with certain conditions. These rules will not only save passengers, who do not come from infected places, much unnecessary trouble, but will enable the inspectors themselves to examine really suspicious cases with greater care than they can do now. There is one thing to which the writer begs once more to draw the attention of the Government. It is the subject of the oppressions which are committed at the inspection stations. People should certainly overlook petty cases of oppression. But it would be best for the Government to appoint a supervisor at each inspection station for the purpose of seeing that no serious oppressions are committed on the passengers.

GENERAL AND GANHARI ASFI, Dec. 31st, 1897.

The Patna memorial against the Plague Circular.

19. The *General and Gauhari Asfi* of the 31st December says that the people of Patna have petitioned the Government of Bengal, complaining that there are provisions in the Plague Circular which are calculated to interfere with the customs and the *pardah* of the native community. The circular has in fact created a sensation in Patna. It is hoped that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal will give the petition his careful consideration.

HITAVADI, Dec. 31st, 1897.

The Natus.

20. The *Hitavadi* of the 31st December writes as follows:—

In reply to an interpellation on the subject of the confinement of the Natus, the Governor of Bombay observed the other day that they had been arrested with a view to securing the internal peace of a part of the Empire. No one knows what disturbance has been caused by the Natus within British dominion, and where. Indeed people believe that Government itself has not yet been able to come to any definite idea regarding the offence committed by them. It is now in a dilemma for having arrested them at the instigation of the Europeans who became wild in fear on account of the Poona murders. It is not able to assign any offence on the part of the Natus, and it cannot, at the same time, release them from an imaginary fear of loss of prestige. It is therefore trying to conceal its fault, and is discrediting itself in the public eye by making time-serving statements.

Government would not have fallen into such a mistake if it had acted with calm deliberation instead of accepting the statement of the alarmed Europeans for gospel truth. When the Natus were arrested with a great parade of armed force, they felt surprised, and asked the Police Superintendent: "Why has the Sarkar sent so many people to take us away? If the all-powerful Sarkar had sent only a petty chaukidar, we should have appeared of our own accord at the appointed place. Where was the need of bringing three hundred armed policemen for this trifling business?"

These words are as expressive of the loyality and sincerity of the Natus as they also are of an unnecessary distrust of the people and improper want of self-possession on the part of the Government.

What is done is done. Government should now devise a remedy for the evil which has been done. The Natus have not been found guilty of any offence. The prestige of the civilized English Government will not remain unimpaired if it does not do justice by releasing the Natus.

Lord Sandhurst is a Liberal, and we therefore hope that he will not fail to repair his mistake. Mr. Gladstone, the leader of his party, has on several occasions shown his greatness by correcting his political mistakes, and we expect a similar proof of greatness from him. There are signs to show that our desire may be fulfilled. The news has been received from Bombay that Lord Sandhurst has ordered the restitution of their moveable property to the Natu family. There can be no doubt that this act of the Governor is sanctioned by a liberal policy and is extremely praiseworthy. The Bombay Presidency Association has lately submitted a memorial to Lord Sandhurst for the release of the Natus. There can be no doubt that His Lordship will immortalise himself if he releases the Natus at the prayer of that Association.

At the time of assuming charge of the Bombay Presidency, Lord Sandhurst promised that he would, by trying to please the people like Mr. Elphinstone, remove the dissatisfaction which had been caused by the administration of Lord Harris. Here is an opportunity for him to make good his promise. Let him please the Bombay people by releasing Tilak and the Natus, and the Indian people will always bless him.

21. A correspondent of the same paper, writing from Panjia in Jessore, complains that the local vaccinator seems to be an incompetent man. Those who have been vaccinated by him have got large pustules, and the flesh all over their body is about to fall off. A more skilful vaccinator should be sent there.

Vaccination in a Jessore village.

HITAVADI, Dec. 31st, 1897.

22. It is rumoured, writes the same paper, that the Bombay Government will show mercy to Mrs. Leicester and release her on the ground of failing health. If Mrs Liecester, who was charged with a very grave offence, is considered a fit object of mercy, we cannot understand why Mr. Tilak, who was convicted only of a political offence, should not be released on the ground of ill-health. There can be no comparison between Mr. Tilak's offence and the offence of which Mrs. Leicester was convicted. Mr. Tilak's rank and position also are far superior to those of Mrs. Leicester. His health, moreover, has been so much impaired that it is feared that he will not come out of jail alive. This being the case, the Bombay Government ought to show mercy to him.

The question of mercy to Mr. Tilak.

HITAVADI.

## III.—LEGISLATIVE.

23. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* of the 28th December thus comments upon section 237 of the Criminal Procedure Bill :—

The Criminal Procedure Bill.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI, Dec. 28th, 1897.

According to section 237 of the Criminal Procedure Bill, "when the accused is charged with an offence he may be convicted of having attempted to commit that offence, although the attempt is not separately charged." It is true that according to section 237 in its present shape a person charged with one offence may, under certain circumstances, be convicted of another, and that the amendment in question only adds the attempt to commit an offence to the list of the offences of any of which a person may be convicted when the particular offence with which he is at first charged is not proved against him. The procedure to convict a person of an offence with which he is not charged without giving him an opportunity to defend himself in respect of that offence is highly objectionable, and the amendment in question enhances the rigour of this procedure. The object of framing a charge against the accused before he is called upon to enter into his defence is to acquaint him with the nature of the offence which he is believed to have committed, and thus to give him an opportunity to defend himself only on those points which, in the opinion of the Court, tell against him. But if a person is convicted of an offence different from that with which he is charged, he is not given an opportunity to defend himself against the offence of which he is convicted. Take an instance in point. A man is accused of setting fire to the house of a neighbour and keeping him under wrongful confinement. The Court after hearing the prosecution charges the accused with wrongful confinement only. The accused in his defence proves that the complainant was not at home when he is said to have been wrongfully confined by him. According to section 237, as it stands at present, in the Criminal Procedure, the accused will have to be acquitted, but according to the proposed amendment of the section he may be convicted of the attempt to keep the complainant under wrongful confinement. The fact is that the proposed amendment of the Criminal Procedure goes against the accused all along the line.

24. The *Sahachar* of the 29th December says that the new section which it is proposed to substitute for section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, will make the law of sedition much harsher than it is now. The proposed section, if passed, will reduce liberty of speech and the liberty of the press to mere names.

The proposed sedition law.

SAHACHAR, Dec. 29th, 1897.

Many profound politicians and statesmen have admitted that the native press of India greatly helps the administration. And it is because the Government has encouraged the native press to write freely, that it criticises Government's actions without fear. It is, of course, the duty of every native editor to write with the deepest loyalty and have the greatest abhorrence of disloyalty. It is certain that Government is passing a new law of sedition only to put a stop to disloyal writings and utterances. But the proposed law will make it difficult for even well-intentioned writers and speakers to draw the line between harmless criticism and criticism which is open to objection. For, who will

say that a protest against a Government measure, however loyally and cautiously worded, will not excite the least contempt or hatred against the Government? The phrase 'by lawful means' used in explanation 2 will not improve matters much, because no sane person ever adopts unlawful means with a view to obtain the alteration of any measure of Government. So far as the writer can see, the enactment of the new section will lead many newspaper editors to give up their vocation in fear, and if all native papers close their business, Government will have to remain in darkness, because it can never expect from English papers all that detailed information regarding the condition of the country and the wants of the people which it obtains from native papers. Under these circumstances, it would be better to leave the present section 124A of the Indian Penal Code as it is, and to enact a new section for lighter offences like exciting hatred, &c., against the Government, providing lighter punishments therefor. Such a course will be free from all objection.

The proposal to punish people who promote or attempt to promote feelings of enmity or ill will between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects, with transportation for life, seems very harsh.

The proposed amendment of section 505, too, is calculated to alarm newspaper editors.

SAHACHAR, Dec. 29th, 1897

The Religious Endowments Bill.

25. The same paper considers Mr. Ananda Charlu's Religious Endowments Bill quite unnecessary, as the object with which it has been introduced is fully served by the existing law. If a *mohanta* here and a *mohanta* there occasionally slide away from the path of duty, a strong public opinion should be sufficient to bring them to their senses. The writer does not believe the number of wicked *mohantas* to be so large as to require fresh legislation for their suppression. Moreover, as protests from the Hindu community are coming in against the Bill, it is hoped that Mr. Charlu will withdraw it.

HITAVADI, Dec. 31st. 1897.

The proposed sedition law.

26. The *Hitavadi* of the 31st December has the following:—

Preparations are being made for ruin in the name of reform. When the proposal for the amendment of the Indian Penal Code was first made, we expected that the law would be made explicit where it was obscure, and brought into harmony with the present state of the country. But instead of this the severity of the law is being increased and an endeavour is being made to hurl a thunderbolt on the heads of the people. The amendment of the sedition section is the most terrific among the proposed amendments of the Penal Code.

That an amendment of section 124A is necessary is clear from the different interpretations which have been put upon it by different courts. We, too, admitted the necessity of such amendment, but we urged that while no one would be sorry to see a man punished who should utter anything with a view to the subversion of British rule, he who impartially criticised the acts of Government, good and bad, and pointed out its defects in burning words, with a view to its good, should not be held a rebel. Unfortunately for us the opposite effect has resulted from Government's misapprehension. The proposed measure is not worthy of the civilised English nation, and is a clear example of savageness and barbarity.

One shudders to think of the disastrous consequences which will follow from the passing of the proposed measure, seeing that even the present law has been found sufficient for the conviction of Tilak, as well as of every other person who has been prosecuted.

A little reflection will enable the reader to see the difference between the proposed and the ex sting law. We too will try our best to explain the difference to him. We will show that the arguments urged by Mr. Chalmers in favour of the proposed measure, and the re-assurances given by him to the people, are worthless.

Mr. Chalmers says that Government is opposed to a revival of the Vernacular Press Act, because it has no quarrel with the press and because it does not wish to make any distinction between the Anglo-Indian and the Native Press.

This is pleasant to hear; but the question is, how far this statement will be acted upon. In our opinion a Press Act would have been a hundred times better than the proposed measure. Although we hear Government declare

that English laws are applicable to all without distinction of colour, the declaration is not found to be acted upon in practice. To take the case of section 124A. Will it ever be employed against the *Englishman* and other Anglo-Indian papers? Far from using, we are seized with consternation at the very thought of using such contemptuous expressions as the *Englishman* applied to Government during the Ilbert Bill agitation, or, not to go so far back, in referring to the opposition to the transport of coolies by the Assam Bengal Railway. And yet the *Englishman* is unscathed, while a respectable native like Tilak is undergoing terrible sufferings in jail without any fault. We should not have found the *Englishman* so jubilant if there had been any likelihood of it and other Anglo-Indian papers being affected by the operation of the proposed measure. As laws, though purporting to be applicable to Natives and Europeans alike, are seldom found to be so applied, there can be no doubt that Natives will be more ground down by the proposed measure than Europeans. Again, under the proposed measure, both speakers and writers will be punished, whereas under a Press Act writers alone could be punished.

In his speech introducing the measure, Mr. Chalmers said—"Every man is free to speak, write or print whatever he pleases, without asking the leave or permission of any authority. But if he speaks, writes or prints anything which contravenes the law of the land, he is liable to be proceeded against and punished." Now observe how contradictory and mysterious Mr. Chalmers' statements are. The proposed measure provides for the punishment of every act which may have the effect of creating hatred and disaffection against Government. But point out any man's defects ever so mildly, you make him, by such fault-finding, an object of popular displeasure. If anybody therefore finds fault with any action of Government, and thereby excites more or less dissatisfaction with Government, he will be liable to punishment under the proposed measure. However loudly, therefore, Mr. Chalmers may proclaim that he has not restricted the liberty of criticising Government measures, the public will not be assured that he has not done so.

Under the existing law the motive of a person uttering something which has the effect of exciting hostility towards Government requires to be judged. But under the proposed measure a person will be counted guilty merely for using objectionable words, even though such words may not have led to outbreaks or demonstrations of such hostility. In every criminal offence the motive of the offender requires to be considered, and it is not easy to understand why this should be dispensed with in the proposed sedition law.

If the proposed measure is passed into law the public will not be at liberty to criticise the measures of Government. If with the intention of alleviating popular suffering anybody says "Government is spending large sums on the frontier wars, it is filling the pockets of highly-paid English officers with exchange compensation, and is wasting large sums in the shape of home charges, and yet it is not reducing the oppressive income and salt taxes. This is very wrong"—will he come under the proposed measure or not? It is certainly with a view to bring the complaint to the notice of Government that the speaker or writer will say or write thus. He also knows that the country has derived great benefit from English rule. He is a well-wisher of the English Government and he desires its permanence, and he will refer to the income and salt taxes only with a view to the alleviation of popular suffering. It will be, however, no wonder if the people are dissatisfied with Government in consequence of his saying this. Will Mr. Chalmers say that the man who speaks or writes thus should be brought under the operation of the proposed law? If he says "yes" he confirms our fears; if he says "no" we shall feel reassured.

Another dreadful provision in the proposed measure is that an expression of ill-feeling towards any particular community will be counted sedition. If this provision is impartially given effect to, Hindus, Musalmans, Europeans, all will have cause for alarm. The *Anglo-Indian* newspapers every now and then vent their spleen on the natives. They attacked, for instance, our Musalman brethren in a very bad spirit during the Tala riots. Need they too be alarmed at this provision?

Mr. Chalmers says that such a provision exists in England which has a homogeneous population, and such a provision is still more necessary in India, where different races and religions are in continual contact. But the very fact that India is inhabited by different communities with different manners and customs renders the existence of such a provision inadvisable. If a man does, or incites his community to do, anything which is sanctioned by his own religion, but which is opposed to the religious beliefs of other communities, he will be liable to punishment under the proposed law. The proceedings of Gorakshani Sabhas must be extremely unpleasant to Christians and Musalmans. On the other hand, if Musalmans make speeches inciting to cow-slaughter they may be said to excite ill feeling. Mr. Chalmers has not explained by means of illustrations what acts are to be counted as sedition and what are not to be counted as such. He has proposed the amendment with a very few general observations, and this has increased the public alarm.

It is also proposed to vest District Magistrates and Magistrates of the first class with jurisdiction in cases of sedition where they are of small importance and require light punishment. Mr. Chalmers has not explained when a case of sedition is to be regarded as unimportant, and what punishment is to be regarded as light. With whatever feelings Englishmen may regard disloyalty, we look upon it as a dreadful crime. A man charged with such an offence should have a fair trial, no matter whether the consequence of his offence is serious or unimportant. In a Magistrate's court the offender will not have the benefit of a trial by jury or assessors. We are not therefore prepared to vest Magistrates with jurisdiction in such cases. Mr. Chalmers' argument that an offender punished by a Magistrate will have the right of appeal to a higher court does not possess much force, for a convicted offender may not have the means to prefer such an appeal.

From every point of view it therefore appears that the proposed measure will do the people more harm than good. If the proposed measure is passed into law the people will live in a state of constant fear. It is ridiculous to refer to the English law, for the conditions of England and India are essentially different. The English law is severe, but how many newspapers have been prosecuted under that law? Will Government say that the press in England does not criticise Government measures as severely as the press in India? The way in which the English press attacks the Government startles as well as disgusts us, and yet those newspapers are not prosecuted. But at this fag-end of the nineteenth century and in the midst of the progress which India has made in education and enlightenment, Government has brought about a new era in the annals of the native press.

The proposed amendment of section 124A is sufficiently alarming. But over and above this, there is the proposed amendment of section 505. No one had any previous intimation of Government's intention to amend section 124A. We do not know whether there was any reference to the amendment of section 124A in the letter which the Government of India addressed to the Local Governments, inviting their opinion on the proposed amendments of the Indian Penal Code. It is our belief, however, that Government did not feel the necessity of amending the section before the press prosecutions and the plague in Bombay. If this is true, we do not realise the necessity of this section or of a Press Act. Government has been successful in every one of the prosecutions it instituted. If it, however, thinks that the accused were unjustly convicted in those cases, it is a different matter.

If the proposed amendment of section 505 is passed into law, no one will be at liberty to complain against any soldier belonging to Her Majesty's army. To take the case of the military Plague Inspectors of Bombay, many complaints were made against them by many people. But Government could not find anything to blame in their conduct. If the proposed amendment is passed into law the newspaper editors and others who found fault with their acts will be liable to punishment. Again, suppose a mufassal paper publishes a report of oppression by European soldiers, and as it is not possible for every editor to verify every statement by a local enquiry, other newspapers condemn the soldiers on the strength of that report. Suppose, further, that the report is subsequently found to be false. The question is, whether every newspaper publishing the report will be liable to prosecution.

27. In criticising the proposed amendments of sections 124A and 505 of the Penal Code, the *Saraswat Patra* of the 1st January writes as follows:—

SARASWAT PATRA, Jan. 1st, 1898.

The proposed sedition law.

Although it is we and our contemporaries who are aimed against in the Bill, and although everybody connected with the press will be deeply affected by it, we cannot in any way condemn the Government's motive in proposing the amendments. It is not good, whenever the Government introduces a necessary amendment in the law, to hold up to public dislike and scorn those who propose the amendment. Such conduct is, indeed, extremely reprehensible and deserves to be punished. It is equally reprehensible to circulate false rumour, &c., with a culpable intent and knowing them to be false. Nor is it desirable that people who create or attempt to create ill-will between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects should go unpunished. But, at the same time, the learned, keen-eyed and liberal-minded members of the Select Committee to which the Bill has been referred should see that an amendment of the existing law does not stop lawful and courteous criticisms of Government's measures, and does not bring under the purview of the law those who circulate false rumours in good faith and not knowing them to be false. It is not also desirable to punish those for creating ill will between the different classes of Her Majesty's subjects who are not actuated by any evil motive or intention in speaking or writing about the honour or glory of their own race or community.

28. The *Bangavasi* of the 1st January has the following:—

BANGAVASI, Jan. 1st, 1898.

The proposed amendment of the sedition law.

Everything has now become as clear as daylight. The darkness has been dispelled and the film in many eyes has been taken off. The manner in which the sedition law is going to be amended has, it must be granted, settled all doubts. We must thank the Government for making the law as clear as possible, for when the Government has once made its intention perfectly clear, all chances of committing mistakes are gone.

It is our impression that we have no right to point out the merits or demerits of a law or any other Government measure, no right to criticise the policy of the Government with the set purpose of pointing out its merits and defects. What the Government wills must be obeyed without the least hesitation; we must render unquestioning obedience to whatever the Government wills to do. As regards Government measures, there is one, and only one, point which admits of controversy or argument. This is the haziness of expression or construction which makes the object or intention of the Government obscure and unintelligible to the public, and is thereby likely to create doubt or suspicion in their mind about it. In any other case it will be sheer impertinence to criticise a Government measure.

The reading of English history and English literature without properly digesting or assimilating the same is sure to produce mental distempers and maladies. "Political independence," "political equality," "the birthright of the people" are phrases palatable, indeed, but quite unsuited to our weak constitution. Too much indulgence in this rich mental food has the inevitable effect of making us giddy.

Hindus as we are, Hindu ideas and Hindu ways of thinking are best suited to our mental constitution. English ideas and English ways of thinking are not good for us. It is the injunction of our *Sastra* not to regard the sovereign as a human being. In the Hindu eye, the king is God incarnate, God in human shape. The English are now the rulers of our country, and the English sovereign is not a human being but a God. For without divine will no one can become a king, a ruler of men.

According to the Hindu *Sastra*, moreover, God is not only the Creator, but also the Preserver and the Destroyer of the universe. No one can call upon God to render an account for His creation, nor is He likely to give an explanation of what He does by way of preserving or destroying the universe. The creation, the preservation and the destruction of the universe are divine *lila*, inscrutable ways of God. It is also owing to divine *maya*, illusion self-imposed by God, that we do good as well as evil, and go either to heaven or to hell. We should look upon our English rulers in the light in which we look

upon God, and we ought to know that English history and English literature are nothing but English *maya*.

Just as we have some measure of liberty under God's rule, so also have we some liberty under British rule. We know from the *Sastra* that we have no moral or religious liberty in the doing of a duty which is imposed upon us by *Sastric* injunction, or in forbearing from an act which we are enjoined not to do. In all other cases, however, we have a large measure of liberty and are free to follow our own choice. What is true of God's rule is also true of British rule, we enjoy the fullest liberty except in those cases in which we are required by the Government to do or forbear from doing an act. An absolute and undisputed ruler of this vast country inhabited by diverse races, by Hindus and Musalmans, Parsis and Christians, the British Government never interferes in the religious and social matters of the people. The people are quite free to act so far as their society and religion are concerned. They have also a large measure of liberty in financial and commercial matters.

Let us repeat that the people should thank the Government now that it has proposed to make the law of sedition as clear as possible. It becomes a dangerous thing for the people when the intention of their master, of their undisputed ruler, that is, who can, as it pleases, do or forbear from doing an act, and can even undo what it has done, is obscure and unintelligible to them. When the master's intention becomes clear, people can know what will please him. Their anxiety is laid at rest, as they can no longer have any risk to run. The proposed amendment of the sedition law is a proof of the ruler's kindness. It makes it quite clear to one and all that no one will henceforward be permitted to say or write anything or make any visible representation which is calculated to bring the Government into hatred or contempt; that the expression "disaffection" includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity or ill-will; that it will be an offence to publish or circulate any statement, rumour, or report with intent to cause, or which is likely to cause, fear or alarm to the public or to any section of the public, whereby they may be induced to commit an offence against the State or against the public tranquillity; or with intent to incite, or which is likely to incite, any class or community of persons to commit any offence against any other class or community. There will henceforward be no ground for doubt or suspicion. In a case under this section, the decision will no longer depend upon the interpretation of the Judge. All chances of doubt and suspicion are gone. All must now admit in one voice that the proposed amendment is for the better.

BANGAVASI, Jan. 1st, 1898.

The Criminal Procedure Bill.

29. The same paper writes as follows, with reference to the proposed amendment of the sections of the Criminal Procedure Bill relating to police diaries:—

If the Government, after taking all circumstances into its consideration and carefully examining the position of the Police and the Magistracy, thinks that it ought to pass the amendment, we shall have no objection. For the Government, and the Government alone, best understands the interests of the people. We have neither the right nor the desire to understand their interests.

If the Government is desirous of giving the accused an opportunity to point out discrepancies in the deposition of a prosecution witness, or to bring to the notice of the Court something in his deposition which goes in his favour, but is at the same time unwilling to allow the accused to see the police diary, we can suggest a middle course. Let it be made compulsory upon every Court to read the police diary in every case and point out to the accused discrepancies, if any, in the deposition of a prosecution witness. If this is done, there will be no objection to the proposed amendment.

Let our counsel be heard—this is not what we say. We have not the courage to say this. But as the Government is going to amend a law, but in a manner which does not make its intention quite clear, we make a few observations on the proposed amendment. Let the Government clearly say what it wants to say, and we shall accept its decree with all humility.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR CHANDRIKA, Jan. 4th, 1898

The proposed amendment of the sedition law.

30. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 4th January has the following:—

Besides the amendment of sections 124A and 505 of the Indian Penal Code, Mr. Chalmers has

proposed two amendments in the Criminal Procedure Code, namely, the amendment of section 109 and the amendment of the second schedule. According to the first of these proposed amendments, people who either orally or in writing disseminate, or attempt to disseminate, obscene, seditious or defamatory matter may be required by a Presidency or a District Magistrate, or a specially empowered Magistrate of the first class, to be bound over and find sureties for good behaviour for a term not exceeding twelve months. The *Statesman* says that if no appeal lies against the decision of a Magistrate in such cases, the liberty of the press will be virtually gone. But the Viceroy, in his speech, observed that the Government did not wish to revive a Press Law, because it had no quarrell with the press and did not want to restrict its liberty. Mr. Chalmers also spoke in the same strain. But is this the way to maintain the liberty of the press? Whenever, in the opinion of the authorities—in the opinion of the police, in a sense—it appears that a person has disseminated, or attempted to disseminate, obscene, seditious, or defamatory matter, he will be bound down and required to find sureties for good behaviour, and failing to find sureties, he will be sent to jail. And these provisions are said to be not inconsistent with the liberty of the press! The *Englishman* is jubilant over these new provisions, no doubt under the impression that they will in no way affect the Anglo-Indian press. But if we take it that these provisions will be applicable, not only in theory but also in practice, to the press in India without distinction, no paper, not even the *Englishman*, ought to rejdice. The Vernacular Press Act was not certainly more rigorous and stringent than the proposed amendments. Under that Act the utmost that a journalist had to do was to sign an indemnity bond or find sureties; the Act did not authorise imprisonment. In fact, the proposed amendments beat the Vernacular Press Act hollow. And still it is said that the Government has moved the proposed amendments instead of reviving the Vernacular Press Act, because it does not think it right to interfere with the liberty of the press! To tell the truth, the proposed amendments contain all the rigorous provisions of the Press Act in addition to their own rigour. The Government has no doubt the right to pass a law, and it can exercise that right in any way it likes. But have the Viceroy and the Law Member also the right to say anything and everything they like? Have they the right to sav anything which is not consistent with what they do? Have they, we ask, the right to talk of maintaining the liberty of the press, while they are going to virtually destroy its liberty? Let our big contemporaries decide whether there is or is not an inconsistency between the Viceroy's speech and action. As for our humble selves, we are almost speechless in surprise, fear and shame. The Viceroy and the Law Member want us to believe that they are friends of the press and are willing to keep its liberty intact, and that that is the reason why they are unwilling to revive the Vernacular Press Act. As a matter of fact, however, their proposal will deal a death-blow at the liberty of the press. There are, moreover, strict and rigorous provisions already in existence in the Penal Code, relating to the publication of obscene and defamatory matter; but those provisions do not satisfy the Government, and it proposes additional measures of a much more stringent character. The *Englishman* is jubilant over these provisions, and we must understand from this that the provisions will be enforced in the case of the native papers and the native papers alone.

The proposed amendment of the second schedule to the Criminal Procedure Code has reference to the trial of cases under section 124A. At present sedition under section 124A is triable only by a Court of Sessions or a High Court. Under the proposed amendment, offences under section 124A shall be triable also by Presidency Magistrates and Magistrates of the first class. So, what now remains to make the proposed sedition legislation complete is to invest Magistrates with the power of summarily trying sedition cases. But the Viceroy tells us that the Government is going to amend the sedition law instead of reviving the Press Act, because it loves the press and is decidedly in favour of its liberty. In our opinion, however, the proposed amendments will prove ruinous to the press—to the native press, that is to say. The native papers will, so to speak, have now to live with a halter round their neck, the officials, including the police, being at liberty to draw it tight whenever they like. The man is not born who will have the courage to fearlessly conduct a newpaper with the proposed amendments hanging over his head.

The *Pioneer* is angry with the Viceroy and the Law Member, because they have not made any distinction between the Native and the Anglo-Indian press in the amendments which they have proposed. Lord Elgin has not revived the Vernacular Press Act, because such a course of conduct does not become an impartial statesman. If Lord Elgin's or Mr. Chalmers' experience of things Indian had not been small they could have understood that the proposed amendments would in practice apply to the native papers and the native papers alone. But the *Pioneer* cannot brook even the theoretical impartiality of the Government, and such is its courage that, being unable to find fault with the Viceroy or the Law Member, it is calling the native papers names and abusing them to its heart's content.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR CHANDRIKA, Jan. 5th, 1898.

The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce on the Salt Bill.

31. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, in its issue of the 5th January, notices the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce's memorial on the Salt Bill:—

(1) The Chamber prays the Government to exempt earth-salt used by the poor for home consumption from the operation of the salt law. It will be well if the Government accedes to this prayer and makes the use of earth-salt an offence only when that salt is used for commercial purposes. But how will the Government prevent the use of such salt for commercial purposes without strictly prohibiting its use in all cases? All that the Government can do is to allow poor people to use earth-salt during famine and scarcity, and it ought to make such a provision as this.

(2) For the benefit of those who are extremely poor the Government should also make some such provision as this in the Salt Law:—If in a salt case the Court sees that the accused did not prepare salt for commercial purposes or for the purpose of cheating the Government of its revenue, it should not punish the accused. Such a provision will prove highly beneficial to poor people without prejudicially affecting the salt-revenue. It will also put a stop to the oppression of the people by the police and salt detectives As it is, the police and the detectives are in the habit of oppressing the people, instituting false cases against them and extorting bribes from them by threatening them with prosecution. To prevent such oppression and exempt the poorest who use earth-salt for domestic consumption from the operation of the law, the Government ought even to bear a slight loss of revenue.

(3) The existing law has made it incumbent on landlords and their agents to keep the Government informed of all offences against the Salt Act committed on their estates. This stringent provision may be safely abolished. The land-owners may at least be leniently dealt with when they fail to act in obedience to this provision through ignorance.

A stringent salt law is necessary simply for the salt revenue, and the Government will abolish the law when it will abolish the salt duty. But will that day ever come?

## VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

DARUSSALTANAT AND URDU GUIDE, Dec. 30th 1897.

The loyalty of the Indian Musalmans.

32. The *Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide* of the 30th December says that devoted loyalty to the ruler is prescribed by the Muhammadan religion as the first and bounden duty of the Musalmans. It is impossible for a true Musalman to be disloyal. It is with a sinister object that the Anglo-Indian press calls the Musalmans disloyal, rebellious and turbulent—abuse which is calculated to grieve and offend them. The Government ought to prohibit the Anglo-Indian press from thus offending the poor and defenceless Musalmans and from maliciously bringing a charge of disloyalty against them. It is nonsense, pure and simple, to lay the blame of disaffection at the door of the entire Musalman community because a handful of them have shown signs of disaffection. It is also foolishness to think that the Musalmans are opposed to the British Government because they render an oath of allegiance to the Sultan of Turkey. The allegiance which the Musalmans pay to the Sultan is religious and not political allegiance—an allegiance, that is, which every man pays to his spiritual leader, and which is not at all opposed to the loyalty which we Indian Musalmans owe to Her Gracious Majesty. It is our sincere desire that the British Government may, by making an offensive and defensive alliance with the Turkish Government, show to the Musalmans of the world that Her Majesty

being the well-wisher of the spiritual head of Islam, is also a sincere well-wisher of that religion.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR, Jan. 1st, 1898.

33. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* of the 1st January has the following:—

The National Congress.

Though we differ on many points with the National Congress, we perceive the necessity of a movement like it. Everybody must admit that it was the National Congress which first drew the attention of the authorities in England to the famine of last year. A public body like the Congress is indeed essential in India for the purpose of serving as an interpreter between the rulers and the ruled. And, so far as we are aware, neither the Government of India nor the higher officials are opposed to the Congress movement, though many Anglo-Indians view it with enmity. The Congress should, on its part, remember that the more calmly and politely a subject people's demands are made to the rulers, the more easily are those demands granted. A subject people can claim nothing as of right; they can only ask for favours from their Sovereign.

SANJIVANI, Jan. 1st, 1898.

34. The *Sanjivani* of the 1st January thus draws a contrast between 1897 and 1797:—

1797 and 1897—a contrast.

Everybody knows how the Mahratta world has fared in 1897. Poona, the ancient metropolis of Maharashtra, is in the grip of the plague. Tilak, a Mahratta Brahmin, is picking oakum in jail, his offence being, according to Mr. Justice Strachey, an attempt to create disaffection against the Government. The Natu brothers, descendants of the cook of the Peshwas, have incurred the displeasure of the Government and are rotting in jail. This was the condition of Maharashtra in 1897. What was its condition in 1797? In that year the Mahrattas gained a glorious victory over the Moguls in the great battle of Kurdla. The Nizam sued for peace and was ready to cede some territory to the Mahratta power. The whole of Antarveda in the north had come within the Mahratta jurisdiction. Mahratta influence had become supreme in Delhi, and Guzrat was trembling under the hoof of the Mahratta horse. The genius and intelligence of Nana Farnavis had so far established Mahratta supremacy in most parts of India that it was naturally expected that Mahratta rule would be soon established all over the country. What a contrast between 1797 and 1897!

Let us look at the matter from another point of view. In 1797 Lord Wellesley became Governor-General of India. The most important events of his rule were the subjugation of the Mahrattas and of Tipu Sultan. In 1897 Lord Elgin was the Governor-General of India. Shall we say that the subjugation of Tilak and the Natu brothers have been the chief events of his rule? Or, has it been in the mind of this high-minded ruler to place British rule on a safe and secure foundation by inventing an instrument which is calculated to keep down all people belonging to the class of Tilak and the Natu brothers? There is nothing strange or shameful in the year 1897 being to the year 1797, and in Lord Elgin being to Lord Wellesley, what the Greco-Turkish war was to the French Revolution, General Lockhart to Napoleon, Abdur Rahman, to Zaman Tilak to Nana Farnavis, the *Kesari* to Kurdla and the young Maharaja of Mysore to Tipu Sultan. There has been a revolution all round within a century.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR CHANDRIKA, Jan. 2nd, 1898.

35. The whole Congress, writes the *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 2nd January, stood up at the very mention of Tilak's name, by way of showing extraordinary regard to him. Babu Surendranath Banerji, who was enthusiastically cheered, observed, with reference to Mr. Tilak, that he was speaking not only for himself, but for the whole native press, when he said that they were convinced in their heart of hearts of Tilak's innocence. Tilak was found technically guilty, but real justice had not been done in his case. To tell the truth, the speaker's sympathy followed Tilak even to jail. A man of Tilak's position and respectability could not be disloyal, for loyalty and patriotism went hand in hand. All sympathetic people have full sympathy with what Babu Surendranath Banerji said, but his speech has no doubt offended the *Englishman* and other Anglo-Indian papers like it. The *Englishman* is most likely to retort that Babu Surendranath's sympathy followed Mr. Tilak to jail because he himself had once been in jail. It is, however, a fact in the

The Congress sympathy with Tilak.

history of journalism in India that the *Englishman* had many times been on the point of being sent to jail.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR CHANDRIKA, Jan. 2nd, 1898

The *Times* on the Congress.

36. Referring to the aims and objects of the Congress, the *Times* writes that an increase of the number of native members of the Legislative Councils will increase native influence in the making of laws, a contingency which will have the sure effect of destroying British rule. More natives in the higher posts of the public service will also have the same effect. The *Times* further observes that no political party in England will sympathise with the Congress in its aims and aspirations. This is well known, but the *Times*' tactics are rather lamentable. If these tactics serve the *Times*' purpose, the people of England must be fools indeed. The object of the *Times* is to keep the Indian people deprived of their rights and privileges, but it has not the courage to say that plainly.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR CHANDRIKA.

The New Year's Day honours.

37. The same paper is glad to see Mr. Finucane made a C.S.I. He tried his best to relieve the distressed people during the late famine. The writer is also glad that Babu Nilmani Mukharji, the learned Principal of the Sanskrit College, and Babu Haraprasad Sastri, the learned Professor of the Presidency College, have been made Mahamahopadhyayas.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR CHANDRIKA, Jan. 5th, 1898.

The State dinner at Government House.

38. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 5th January observes, with reference to the State dinner at Government House, that as the Government incurs the expense of giving a dinner to the European community, it ought to incur some expense to entertain the Native community with some sort of amusement. Native theatricals or some other form of entertainment in which the natives can take a part ought to be arranged for from time to time at Government House. The British Government in India is not a Government of Christians alone, but of Hindus and Musalmans as well. It ought, therefore, to provide an entertainment in which all classes of people can take part. A dinner is not such an entertainment. Let the Christians have their dinner by all means, but let Hindus and Musalmans too have some sort of entertainment. The Government ought not to grudge some expense on this account. It ought to spend at least as much money on a native entertainment as it spends on the dinner. It ought certainly to spend more on such an entertainment, if it takes into account the proportion which the native population bears to the Christian and the ratio which the taxes paid by the former bear to the taxes paid by the latter.

## URIYA PAPERS.

URIYA AND NAVASAMVAD, Nov. 17th, 1897.

Collection of rates in the Balasore Municipality.

39. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* of the 17th November is sorry to notice that the executive of the Balasore Municipality do not look after the work of the collecting *sircars* with proper care, and that these *sircars* are known to collect taxes twice in the same quarter and from the same person. As a consequence, the poor tax-payers of the Balasore Municipality feel themselves oppressed in various ways. The writer draws the attention of the higher authorities to the alleged irregularities of the Balasore Municipality.

URIYA AND NAVASAMVAD.

Proposed transfer of an outpost.

40. Referring to the proposal of the transfer of the Singla outpost from the jurisdiction of the Sub-Registrar of Jallesore to that of the Sub-Registrar of Balasore, a correspondent of the same paper draws the attention of the Collector of that district to the distance of the villages of the Singla outpost from Balasore, and points out that the proposal, if carried out, will put the villagers affected by the change to great inconvenience.

UTKALDIPIKA, Nov. 20th, 1897.

The appointment of a European tutor to some minor Rajas objected to.

41. Referring to the appointment of a European tutor in the place of a Native to the minor Rajas of the Ganjam district at Chatrapur, the *Utkaldipika* of the 20th November argues that the estates of the minor Rajas being very small, they can hardly bear the cost of European management, that the European tutor knows not the mother-tongue of the Uriya Prince, and is therefore unable to teach them efficiently, and that a Hindu tutor is necessary

to bring up the minors in the social and religious traditions of the families to which they belong.

42. The same paper draws the attention of the public to a small pamphlet, issued by the Hon'ble M. S. Das, advocating the grant of a permanent settlement to the zamindars of Orissa, and prays that Government will not be slow to redeem their promise of such a settlement, made more than once in the past. At any rate the revenue of the *mahals* subject to flood and inundation should be remitted in those years when such calamities happen.

UTKALDIPIKA, Nov. 20th, 1897.

The question of a permanent settlement of Orissa.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

*Bengali Translator.*

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

*The 8th January 1898.*

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